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NEWS.

THE SOCIETY for the promotion of Agricultural Science, at its recent meeting in Detroit, elected Professor B. D. Halsted, of New Brunswick, N. J., president for the ensuing year. The next meeting will be held in Boston in August 1898. The society includes a considerable proportion of active botanists among its members, and many papers of botanical interest are presented before it.

TO DETERMINE more exactly the distribution of the several trees popularly known as pignuts (including *Hicoria odorata* or *H. microcarpa*), Mr. W. W. Ashe, forester of the North Carolina Geological Survey, would be glad to get specimens of these trees, especially from Michigan, central New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware, and from all the southwestern states. The essential parts of a hickory specimen are vigorous twigs with well developed buds, and fruit and leaves. If desired he will return any material sent, and will determine any for persons wishing it. He may be addressed at Raleigh, N. C.

THE SUBTROPICAL LABORATORY at Eustis, Florida, under the direction of the Division of Vegetable Physiology and Pathology of the Department of Agriculture, has been abandoned as a station, and Messrs. Swingle and Webber should hereafter be addressed at Washington. The tropical work, however, will not be discontinued, but will be conducted hereafter from Washington as headquarters. A small garden tract and laboratory have been secured at Miami, Florida, where experiments can be conducted, and where work can be done with laboratory facilities whenever desired. It is expected to make a feature of introducing and testing varieties of tropical plants which can be grown successfully in the tropical and subtropical portions of the United States. Extensive experiments have been made in crossing and hybridizing the orange and other citrous fruits, pineapples, guavas, etc., and the resulting hybrids will be cultivated in this garden. It will also serve as a tropical station for amelioration experiments in the modification of some of our native fruits.

IN THE AMERICAN NATURALIST for October there appears a brief biographical sketch, with portrait, of the late Dr. James Ellis Humphrey. The sudden death of this most promising young American botanist came as a great shock to the whole botanical fraternity. From the sketch referred to the following details of his life and work are selected :

He was born in Weymouth, Mass., August 5, 1861, and received his early education in the Weymouth schools. In 1886 he graduated from the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University, with the degree of S.B., and was at once appointed an assistant under Professor Goodale. In 1887 he became instructor in botany in Indiana University, and in 1888 was appointed botanist in the Agricultural Experiment Station at Amherst, Mass., where he remained until 1892. At Amherst he continued his studies under the direction of Harvard, and in 1892 received from the university the degree of Sc.B. From that time until 1894 he studied under Professor Strasburger at Bonn, and returning to America was made a fellow in the Johns Hopkins University. In the next year he was appointed lecturer in botany in the same institution, and in the present year was advanced to an associate professorship. In June he visited Jamaica with a party of students, where he died August 17.

Dr. Humphrey's first published paper was on the development of the frond of the alga *Agarum Turneri*. At Amherst he naturally paid large attention to the fungi, and the reports of the Experiment Station contained many of his contributions upon plant diseases. In Strasburger's laboratory he directed his attention to cytological studies, and most of his later publications have been in this field. It was in the direction of cytological work that his botanical friends expected large things of him. For several years he has been the American correspondent of the *Botanische Centralblatt*, and also translated and edited Zimmermann's *Botanical Microtechnique*. At the time of his death he was one of the associate editors of the reorganized *American Naturalist*.